Section I:

AMENDMENT to the CLAIMS

Claim 1 (currently amended):

A method for bidding by proxy in an automated offering or auctioning system on behalf of a bidder or participant, comprising the steps of:

provided a bid parameter set having ~~one or more~~ <u>a plurality of</u> proxy bid parameters, said proxy bid parameters indicating proxy conditions for at least one offering or auction to which proxy bidding is to be made, at least one of which parameters includes a counter bid delay;

checking at least one current bid level in a bid data store of an offering or auction system;

determining if any of said proxy conditions have been met including that said current bid level reflects a current bid placed by an auction participant other than the participant for which proxy bidding is being performed; and

placing a counter bid into at least one auction responsive to said proxy conditions being met and a time following or upon the elapse of said counter bid delay from a time of placement of said current bid.

Claim 2 (original):

The method as set forth in Claim 1 wherein said step of determining if any proxy conditions have been met comprises determining if said current bid level is below an indicated bid maximum parameter in said proxy bid parameters.

Claim 3 (original):

The method as set forth in Claim 2 wherein said step of determining if said current bid level is below an indicated bid maximum parameter further comprises determining if a specified time during an auction open period has not been reached yet such that a specified maximum bid may be placed before such specified time.

Claim 4 (original):

The method as set forth in Claim 2 wherein said step of determining if said current bid level is below an indicated bid maximum parameter further comprises determining if a specified time prior to an auction close time has been reached such that a specified maximum bid may be placed after such specified time.

Claim 5 (canceled).

Claim 6 (currently amended):

A computer-readable medium comprising:

a computer readable medium suitable for storage of computer program code, said code being retrievable and executable by a computer; and

one or more computer program codes encoded in said computer readable medium adapted to instruct a computer to perform the steps of:

providing a bid parameter set having ~~one or more~~ <u>a plurality of</u> proxy bid parameters, said proxy bid parameters indicating proxy conditions for at least one offering or auction to which proxy bidding is to be made, at least one of which parameters includes a counter bid delay;

checking at least one current bid level in a bid data store of an offering or auction system;

determining if any of said proxy conditions have been met including that said current bid level reflects a current bid placed by an auction participant other than the participant for which proxy bidding is being performed; and

placing a counter bid into at least one auction responsive to said proxy conditions being met and at a time following or upon the elapse of said counter bid delay from a time of placement of said current bid.

Claim 7 (original):

The computer-readable medium as set forth in Claim 6 wherein said program code for determining if any proxy conditions have been met comprises program code for determining if said current bid level is below an indicated bid maximum parameter in said proxy bid parameters.

Claim 8 (original):

>   The computer-readable medium as set forth in Claim 7 wherein said program
>   code for determining if said current bid level is below an indicated bid
>   maximum parameter further comprises program code for determining if a
>   specified time during an auction open period has not been reached yet such
>   that a specified maximum bid may be placed before such specified time.

Claim 9 (original):

>   The computer-readable medium as set forth in Claim 7 wherein said program
>   code for determining if said current bid level is below an indicated bid
>   maximum parameter further comprises program code for determining if a
>   specified time prior to an auction close time has been reached such that a
>   specified maximum bid may be placed after such specified time.

Claim 10 (canceled).

Claim 11 (currently amended):

A proxy agent for an automated bidding system, said bidding systems having a bid data store containing current bid level information for one or more auctions or offerings, said proxy agent comprising:

a proxy bid parameter set disposed in an automated bidding system having ~~one or more~~ a plurality of proxy bid parameters, said proxy bid parameters indicating proxy conditions for at least one offering or auction to which proxy bidding is to be made, at least one of which parameters including a counter bid delay;

a current bid level checker operable by said automated bidding system for checking at least one current bid level in said bid data store;

a proxy condition evaluator operable by said automated bidding system for determining if any of said proxy conditions have been met including that said current bid level reflects a current bid placed by an auction participant other than the participant for which proxy bidding is being performed; and

a counter bid generator operable by said automated bidding system for placing a counter bid into at least one auction responsive to said proxy conditions being met and at a time following or upon the elapse of said counter bid delay from a time of placement of said current bid.

Claim 12 (original):

The proxy agent as set forth in Claim 11 wherein said proxy condition evaluator is adapted to determine if said current bid level is below an indicated bid maximum parameter in said proxy bid parameters.

Claim 13 (original):

The proxy agent as set forth in Claim 12 wherein said proxy condition evaluator is adapted to determine if a specified time during an auction open period has not been reached yet such that a specified maximum bid may be placed before such specified time.

Claim 14 (original):

    The proxy agent as set forth in Claim 12 wherein said proxy condition evaluator is
    adapted to determine if a specified time prior to an auction close time has been reached
    such that a specified maximum bid may be placed after such specified time.

Claim 15 (canceled).